

1918—



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FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN

An interpretation of current international events by the Research Staff of the Foreign Policy Association

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, Incorporated

22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

VOL. XXIV, No. 11

DECEMBER 29, 1944

EUROPE'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS CALL FOR SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE

IN these harrowing days, when the rising tide of battle on the Western front brings to every American home the anxiety experienced for years by the peoples of Europe and Asia, those who have suffered irreparable losses and those, still untouched, who want to help others bear the burden of sorrow, ask themselves what they can do to prevent such catastrophe in the future. As Pope Pius XII said in his Christmas message, at the very moment when the bitterness of war "bids to reach the limits of paroxysm," mankind's age-long aspirations for lasting peace are also approaching a climax. Men and women who face death every day on battlefields or under the terror of Nazi rule have a passionate desire to make sure that their sacrifice of all the joys and satisfactions of life, and life itself, will at least assure to others the peaceful pursuit of happiness. It is the duty of all of us who, through these sacrifices are still alive and free, to work without respite, with what the Pope describes as "holy obstinacy," for the realization of this desire, left to us by our dead in irrevocable trust.

GROWING SCRUTINY OF WAR AIMS. It would be a violation of truth to pretend that any one of the United Nations entered this conflict in the spirit of a crusade to abolish war and create an effective system of collective security against future aggression. All of the United Nations were drawn into the vortex through the stark necessity of a struggle for survival. But, as the struggle proceeds, its very ferocity and destructiveness cause people everywhere to demand that it should have as its aim something higher, more noble than mere physical success. This demand becomes all the more urgent as we realize that, judged solely by the standard of military power and skill, Germany still constitutes a serious threat to the Allies. Our greatest hope of ultimate victory stems not only from the superiority in industrial potential and available armaments we can display, but

from the use we and our allies plan to make of victory.

It is this growing concern with the ends, as well as means, of the war that accounts for the controversy in Britain and the United States over the question whether the Atlantic Charter has or has not been betrayed in Poland and Greece. To place this question in focus, we must recall that the "common principles" enunciated in the Charter on August 14, 1941 were declared to be principles "in the national policies" of Britain and the United States, on which these two countries "base their hopes for a better future for the world." The Charter can be taken to represent the ideals toward which President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill believed their countrymen aspire—qualified by the knowledge that, in relations between human beings, ideals all too often fail of complete realization. Of the eight principles set forth in the Charter, the first three are now particularly under discussion. Britain and the United States declared, first, that "their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other"; second, that "they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned"; and third, that "they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

STATUS OF ATLANTIC CHARTER. To say that developments in Poland and Greece have made a mockery of the Atlantic Charter would be just as defeatist as to say that, because human beings do not live up in daily practice to the noblest tenets of their religious faiths, therefore these faiths have been consigned to the scrap-heap. Nations, being composed of fallible human beings, find many reasons to excuse their failings. Russia, which was not originally a party to the Atlantic Charter, but did sign the United

Nations Declaration of January 1, 1942 affirming the principles of the earlier document, can say in justification of its policy that it had incorporated the Baltic states and eastern Poland into the U.S.S.R. in 1939-40, before the Charter had even been thought of, and that the Charter therefore does not cover these territories—any more than it appears to cover the colonial possessions of Britain, France or Holland in Asia. The British government, whose repression of armed resistance by the EAM forces in Greece has been denounced in this country and in Britain as contrary to the third principle of the Atlantic Charter, can argue that its measures are intended to give the Greek people ultimately the right "to choose the form of government under which they will live"—a right which, according to Mr. Churchill, is threatened by the very existence of armed political groups. On Poland, on Greece, on any issue that arises among the United Nations, arguments can be cogently presented by every party to the controversy. The task of statesmanship is to find a workable compromise between the contending elements—a compromise that, obviously, will not suit everybody, but may make it possible for people to resume something approaching peaceable relations with each other.

THE VIRTUE OF DEMOCRACY. The greatest virtue of democracy is that it permits and fosters compromise. Democracy can never develop the streamlined efficiency of arbitrary dictatorship, achieved at the point of the gun or whip; but, if kept reasonably free of selfish group interests, it can make

it possible for people diverse in color, race, creed, and tradition to learn to work together for common ends. By affirming his faith in the democratic process, the Pope has made a signal contribution to clarification of the world-wide controversy over the relative merits of democracy and totalitarianism. At the same time the Pope emphasized what so many advocates of democracy forget—that it is by far the most difficult way of life, imposing the sternest obligations for self-control both on the citizens of a truly democratic state, and on those among them who accept the risks and privileges of leadership. The Pope made a sound distinction between "the people," politically articulate and responsible, and inchoate "masses" that can become all too easily the prey of irresponsible dictators. The trouble is that in many countries lack of vision and courage on the part of those who claimed leadership has in the past made it impossible for "masses" to achieve, by the orderly process of reform, the maturity of "peoples," and for nations to effect orderly territorial changes. These past failures cannot be erased merely by expressions of high-minded principles, as in the Atlantic Charter. They can eventually be corrected only if we all devote ourselves unremittingly to the primary task of our times—the creation of an international organization within whose framework all peoples would feel sufficiently secure from aggression to face the risks of change both at home and abroad.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

BRITAIN RE-EXAMINES ISSUES IN GREEK CRISIS

A special British communiqué dated Christmas Day 1944, declaring that Prime Minister Churchill and Foreign Secretary Eden had arrived in Athens to convene a conference representative of Greek political opinion, was one of the few heartening announcements the Allies have received from Europe during this holiday season. Subsequent events have not, however, been equally encouraging, for on December 27 fighting between British and Greek EAM forces again broke out following an EAM artillery attack on the Anglo-Greek naval headquarters.

Although Prime Minister Churchill has not yet achieved the compromise he hoped to win through his personal intervention in the Greek civil war, he continues to hold out the promise that, if agreement can be reached, a regency will be established under the sole control of Archbishop Damaskinos, who has the reputation of being a fair-minded man unswayed by political considerations. Under this arrangement, King George II will not be permitted to return from exile in London unless a free plebiscite on the form of Greece's post-war government reveals a demand for restoration of the monarchy. In the proposed plebiscite more than the constitutional issue will be at stake, however,

for the monarchy has become the symbol of differences that divide Left and Right in Greece. If, therefore, EAM and its sympathizers win, their victory will probably result not only in the establishment of a republic, but also in the adoption of a number of socialist measures. In the field of foreign affairs this group might be expected to retain its close wartime ties with the Partisans of Yugoslavia, and thus indirectly with Russia, instead of adopting the predominantly pro-British orientation that King George was expected to favor.

WHY BRITAIN'S POLICY CHANGED. The main reasons for Prime Minister Churchill's decision to reconsider his government's attitude toward the EAM forces are worth noting, for they may occur elsewhere in Europe as other nations are freed of Nazi rule and insist on genuine independence. The relative weight of the considerations involved can only be guessed at, but one of the most important among them was unquestionably the British public's opposition to the use of British forces against the Greeks. Although the Labor party, as the spearhead of the opposition, was not inclined to force the issue at this time because of the necessity for preserving wartime unity, its leaders frankly declared that the

Prime Minister would have to give a reckoning when general elections are held following the defeat of Germany. And if periodicals and mass meetings furnish a fair test of opinion, the British were so greatly disturbed by the Greek crisis that the government began to fear the effects of this state of mind on the war effort.

Another consideration that affected London's decision to abandon its original plan to disarm the EAM and refuse to deal with it politically was the unexpected strength displayed by these partisan forces. The British had apparently thought that their guerrilla opponents would be obliged to sue for an armistice not only because of their inability to combat superior armed units and air power but because of their need for food, which was promised to all Greeks as soon as the return of peace made relief work possible. What the British did not anticipate was that the number of EAM troops would grow, despite heavy casualties, thanks to heavy desertions from the EDES, their British-supported opponents, and that the prospect of food relief would not bring the guerrillas to terms. It would be rash to assume from the Greek example that food will not prove an effective means of restoring "order" in other liberated areas on subsequent occasions—as it was in various parts of eastern Europe at the close of World War I—but to the EAM, at least, relief was considered an inadequate price for the acceptance of political institutions they opposed. After more than three years of acute food shortages under German rule, the EAM and its supporters apparently preferred a few more weeks or months of deprivation to defeat of their political aims.

PRESSURE FROM THE UNITED STATES.

Pressure exerted by the United States, in the form of the note issued by Secretary of State Stettinius on December 7, calling for complete political freedom for the Greek people, also influenced the British government and may set a precedent for similar American action in other liberated nations. But it was not only on the official level that the British perceived danger signals to future Anglo-American cooperation. Among the most threatening aspects of unofficial American criticism, as the British saw it, was the possibility that former isolationists, who have been only half-heartedly converted to the policy of international cooperation as the best method of keeping peace in the future, would find Britain's unilateral political action in Greece an invitation to revert to their original position. But it would be untrue to say that all, or most, of the criticisms of Britain's policy in Greece stemmed from former isolationists. The fact is that millions of Americans have assumed that our armies are fighting in Europe not merely to safeguard this nation's security, or that of Britain and Russia, but also to assure the post-war independence of the countries conquered by Germany. Many of us, however, have not sufficiently heeded the corollary of this view—and that is that Britain and Russia cannot be expected to abstain from carving spheres of influence for themselves unless there is some alternative system through which they can hope to achieve security. In the case of Greece the United States cannot reasonably expect that the British will surrender their influence on this strategically important nation at the eastern end of the Mediterranean unless we are prepared to give Britain concrete assurances that its hopes for future security will not be jeopardized as a result.

WINIFRED N. HADSEL

THE F.P.A. BOOKSHELF

The Making of Modern Holland, by A. J. Barnouw. New York, W. W. Norton, 1944. \$2.75

Interesting historical background on a country soon to resume its rightful place in world affairs.

Mexico: Magnetic Southland, by Sydney A. Clark. New York, Dodd, Mead, 1944. \$3.00

Pleasantly written description with a bit of historic background to interest prospective visitors.

The Gentleman from Massachusetts: Henry Cabot Lodge, by Karl Schriftgiesser. Boston, Little, Brown, 1941. \$3.00

In these days, when Dumbarton Oaks is so much in people's minds, it is particularly fitting to refresh memories on the brilliant, sharply cynical man who played so important a part in keeping the United States out of international cooperation after the first World War.

Germany and Europe: A Spiritual Dissension, by Benedetto Croce. New York, Random House, 1944. \$1.25

The famous Italian anti-Fascist analyzes the forces that he believes separate Germany from the mainstream of European civilization, and concludes that the defeat of the Germans will bring about the necessary change in their mentality.

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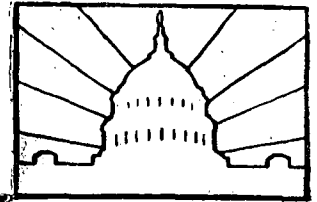
Subscription \$5; to F.P.A. members, \$3.

FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN. Vol. XXIV, No. 11, DECEMBER 29, 1944. Published weekly by the Foreign Policy Association, Incorporated. National Headquarters, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y. FRANK ROSS MCCOY, *President*; DOROTHY F. LEE, *Secretary*; VERA MICHAELS DEAN, *Editor*. Entered as second-class matter December 2, 1921, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Three Dollars a Year. Please allow at least one month for change of address on membership publications.

F. P. A. Membership (which includes the Bulletin); Five Dollars a Year

Produced under union conditions and composed and printed by union labor.

Washington News Letter



GERMAN DRIVE HEIGHTENS NEED FOR GREATER ALLIED UNITY

The counterattack the Germans launched against the American First Army on December 16 has forced the Administration to examine soberly all possible steps that might be taken at an early date to strengthen the United Nations coalition. Only a deterioration of Allied unity, already disturbed by disagreement concerning Greece, Italy and Poland, could turn the German counterattack into a major Nazi accomplishment.

NEW DIPLOMATIC GOAL. Although military unity has not yet suffered from political differences between the Allies, these differences and the German counteroffensive have combined to change the immediate goal of Allied diplomacy from a search for a formula of post-war cooperation to a search for basic principles of immediate common action. The Roosevelt Administration has hitherto placed the major emphasis of foreign policy on the need for the establishment of an international security organization that could preserve the peace after its restoration and would maintain the wartime alliance of the United Nations in peacetime. On December 23, however, Senator Joseph H. Ball, Republican of Minnesota, on leaving the White House after a conference with President Roosevelt indicated that he feared present disagreement among the Allies might jeopardize hopes for future cooperation in an international organization. In a joint statement with Senator Carl Hatch, Democrat of New Mexico, Senator Ball said: "There is no easy solution in sight for the different problems and responsibilities facing the United Nations and particularly the United States, Great Britain and Russia. So much is at stake that we believe this country must make a supreme effort to solve these immediate problems, in which we must have the cooperation of our Allies."

But while President Roosevelt has already, through Mr. Byrnes and other officials, taken measures to tighten the home front, he is still weighing decisions in foreign policy which require a compromise of special Russian and British interests in Europe. At his press conference on December 22 he had no comment on the proposal made by British Foreign Secretary Eden the previous day for quarterly meetings of United States, British and Russian foreign ministers, and dismissed a suggestion for the creation of a United Nations political chiefs of staff committee. The President may disclose his intentions in his address on the state of the Union to the 79th Congress,

which convenes on January 3.

Stern political and military realities have in any event dissipated the airy confidence created here by Anglo-American conferences, and have focused attention on the need to broaden agreement among the United Nations. At the close of their conference in Quebec, on September 16, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill said that they had "reached decisions on all points . . . with regard to the completion of the war in Europe." On October 27, however, Mr. Churchill, on returning to London from his conference in Moscow with Marshal Stalin, expressed concern that "no final result" in full agreement on political problems before the alliance "can be obtained until the heads of the three governments have met again together." This emphasis on the need for a three-power conference strengthens the view in Washington that President Roosevelt has Russia foremost in mind in his careful scrutiny of future foreign policy. In this connection it should be noted that on December 20 Secretary of State Stettinius announced Charles E. Bohlen, former chief of the State Department's Near Eastern Division and the Department's leading expert on Russia, was being assigned to liaison work between the Department and the White House.

HOW STRONG IS GERMANY? The defeat of Germany remains the greatest task of the United Nations coalition and its greatest test. Officials here find it impossible to assess the military effects of the German counterattack. It may shorten the war, as Secretary of War Stimson suggested on December 21, if it should turn out that Field Marshal General Karl von Rundstedt has opened his offensive too soon for it to achieve its maximum effect. But it may prolong the war by preventing the Western allies from pressing their offensive on the Rhine front when the Russians open their anticipated offensive in the east. The Nazis, however, have done two things for the Allies: they have aroused them to the danger of relaxing their efforts until the German armies have ceased firing, and have killed the feeling of optimism that marked the Quebec Conference, after which Mr. Roosevelt said he hoped the surrender of Germany might come soon, and the Moscow Conference, after which Mr. Churchill said he believed the Allies were "in the last lap" of the war against Germany.

BLAIR BOLLES

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